

Good afternoon senators and members of the committee -

The following testimony provides statistical and common-sense based **opposition to HB 6667**, An Act Addressing Gun Violence.

The problem statement accompanying the HB6667 states that CT's gun laws, which since 2013 are referred to as some of the strictest in the country, contribute to CT having one of the lowest firearm mortality rates in the country.

This claim doesn't hold true when reviewing some of the most readily available high-level Center for Disease Control and Prevention data (1). Per the CDCs Connecticut firearm mortality statistics, from 2005 to 2019 the firearm mortality rates have remained consistent, with an up-tic in 2020. It follows that **the incredibly invasive, restrictive, and in some cases unconstitutional 2013 anti-gun laws have had no effect on the reduction of firearm mortality rates**, in fact showing an opposite correlative effect.

The 2013 laws' ineffectiveness is further supported by Connecticut's own Office Of Legislative Research (2), disclosing **increases of murders and aggravated assaults with a firearm in the period of 2013-2017, once again showing the opposite of the claimed effect of the 2013 legislation**. Noted below are a few of the many erroneous solutions of the proposed legislation:

- Banning open carry in order to "align with the reasonable expectations of Connecticut residents": This aims to change the current open carry law based on some residents' ignorance of existing laws that have been in place for many decades. **Criminalizing legal behavior (such as open-carry) due to the lack of citizens' familiarity with existing law is an inefficient and dangerous precedent**. A common sense solution would seek to promote citizens familiarization with existing law.

- Banning the carrying of firearms in alcohol-serving establishments: This **borderline unconstitutional proposal is reducing a citizen's ability to protect themselves**, if their daily routine takes them into ANY alcohol-serving establishment, such as a bar, pub, or restaurant.

- Prohibiting the bulk purchasing of handguns to discourage straw purchases: While straw purchases are an inherent risk in any regulated industry, limiting purchasers to buying no more than a single handgun per month is misguided and detrimental to the firearm owners' ability to select a handgun that suits their ergonomics and abilities. Handguns are individual specific tools that require practice to facilitate proper and safe handling. Returning a handgun that isn't a good fit and **being told they cannot purchase another handgun for a month, puts the owner at additional risk of being the victim of a violent crime**, during the time they are unable to protect themselves or their loved ones.

- Stopping the flow of illegal "ghost guns" into communities by forcing the registration of ghost guns: **Registering ghost guns will put an undue burden upon the legal owners of firearms, while remaining completely ineffective on criminals** who do not follow the law and would not register their firearms. This is supported by research at the Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health which indicated that 80% of gun crimes are committed by persons who are in illegal possession of the firearms.

- Strengthening penalties related to the state's ban on large-capacity magazines: This addition further deepens the consequence of a likely unconstitutional law concerning firearm magazine capacity. **The currently disputed ban ensures that a criminal unlawfully carrying a firearm with a magazine over 10 rounds will have a (potentially devastating) advantage over his law-abiding victim**.

### **Citations:**

(1) CDC Firearm mortality rates for CT: [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/firearm\\_mortality/firearm.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/firearm_mortality/firearm.htm)

2020: 219

2019: 190

2018: 186

2017: 188

2016: 172

2015: 189

2014: 187

2005: 187

(2) Office Of Legislative Research: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2018/rpt/pdf/2018-R-0306.pdf>

**Table 1: Murders with Firearm**

Municipality	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Subtotal (2013- 2017)	Average Annual Estimated Population (2013- 2017)	Average Annual Rate (per 10,000 persons)
Bridgeport	9	8	15	8	16	56	146,994	0.76
Hartford	19	15	26	13	23	96	124,074	1.55
New Haven	17	10	12	10	5	54	130,442	0.83
Stamford	1	1	1	0	0	3	128,709	0.05
Waterbury	2	5	1	7	9	24	108,937	0.44
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>639,157</b>	<b>0.73</b>

**Table 3: Aggravated Assaults with Firearm**

Municipality	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Subtotal (2013- 2017)	Average Annual Estimated Population (2013- 2017)	Average Annual Rate (per 10,000 persons)
Bridgeport	148	142	112	159	147	708	146,994	9.63
Hartford	183	191	202	189	190	955	124,074	15.39
New Haven	152	141	145	173	140	751	130,442	11.51
Stamford	6	10	12	21	13	62	128,709	0.96
Waterbury	23	22	42	61	63	211	108,937	3.87
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>2,687</b>	<b>639,157</b>	<b>8.41</b>

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DPH/Injury-Prevention/CTVDRS/Firearm-Deaths-and-Non-Fatal-Injuries-Report\\_2015\\_2020.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DPH/Injury-Prevention/CTVDRS/Firearm-Deaths-and-Non-Fatal-Injuries-Report_2015_2020.pdf)

(3) Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health: <https://foac-pac.org/uploads/Reports-Studies/15-12-07-PGH-Guns-80percent-Crime-Illegal-Guns-SocialMedicine.pdf>